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News Release

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Meetings on Missouri River basin authorized purposes study scheduled for Pierre and Billings

OMAHA – Two more sessions in a series of focus group and tribal meetings in support of the Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study are being sponsored by the Army Corps of Engineers in Pierre, S.D. and Billings, Mont. The first will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 26, in Pierre at the Pierre Area Chamber of Commerce, 800 West Dakota Ave. The second will be on Thursday, Jan. 28, in Billings at the Shrine Auditorium, 1125 Broadwater Ave. The focus group part of the meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. The opportunity for public comment begins at 7 p.m.

An independent facilitator will conduct the meetings. Invited participants will be asked a series of questions designed to share perspectives about the purposes identified in the 1944 Flood Control Act, discuss how to optimize values and priorities in the basin and develop and critique ideas about how to best structure public involvement throughout the duration of the study.

After the focus group session is completed at 7 p.m., other members of the public attending the meeting will be invited to make comments on both the issues and the public engagement process.

The series of meetings started in November and will run through late-February. They have been well attended by invited participants representing interests such as utilities, agriculture, navigation, development, recreation, Tribes, state and local government, water supply, and fish and wildlife. There also have been many members of the public representing themselves or a wide variety of interest groups.

These focus groups meetings are not the formal scoping meetings that will define the size and shape of the study. Those will be conducted later this summer. Advance notice of the dates and sites will be announced later in the spring.

The Army Corps of Engineers has been directed by Congress to conduct a review of the original purposes established by the 1944 Flood Control Act. The goal of the multi-year study is to determine if changes in the eight purposes are warranted. They are flood control, hydropower, water supply, irrigation, navigation, recreation, water quality and fish and wildlife. Infrastructure operated by both the Corps and Bureau of Reclamation is included in the study.

Tribal Meeting and Focus Group Meeting Schedule

Nov 19	Kansas City, Kansas
Dec 8	Bismarck, North Dakota
Dec 14 & 16	Tribal Meetings, Rapid City, South Dakota
Jan 12	St. Louis, Missouri
Jan 14	Omaha, Nebraska
Jan 26	Pierre, South Dakota
Jan 28	Billings, Montana
Feb 4	Columbia, Missouri
Feb 23	New Orleans, Louisiana
Feb 25	Memphis, Tennessee

Additional information on the authorized purposes study is available at www.mraps.org.